ROUTING SLIP

TO	NAME AND ADDRESS	INITIALS	DATE
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REMARKS

We would like to discuss this paper with you as soon as possible, since Mr. Bissell notes that there is some urgency connected with moving toward an agreed position between our respective elements. I should note that Mr. Bissell has seen the attached.

We are hopeful that it will be regarded by you as being evolutionary rather than revolutionary!

[redacted]

Asst Chief, DPD-DD/P

PHONE NO. Code 143, X4713

DATE 12/1/61

FORM 1-59 1582 (40)

TOP SECRET

This document contains information relating to CXCART, CORONA & NRO

Hq USAF, Gen Curtin

TOP SECRET

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29 November 1961

DIVISION OF RESPONSIBILITY WITHIN NRO

The National Reconnaissance Office was established by joint agreement between the Department of Defense and Central Intelligence Agency through the mechanism of a covert combination of certain elements within the Air Force and within the CIA. Through this combination and by virtue of the authority granted to the NRO by the aforementioned agreement, this office has thereby been given authority and responsibility over several ongoing reconnaissance programs. These programs are in different stages of development and operation. They have in certain cases been instituted, funded and managed, both technically and operationally, and protected security-wise in somewhat differing fashions.

It is the view of the CIA that changes should be instituted in management and assignment of responsibility for programs under NRO cognizance on a carefully considered and properly timed basis. It is the view also of the CIA that the working relationships established within the NRO itself and the assignment of authority and responsibility between the two parts of the office must remain sufficiently broad and flexible so that new programs not now well defined will not be forced into a pattern of management which would make difficult the technical direction, funding, operational control or the security of such programs.

Finally, in the view of the CIA, the division within the NRO on funding and technical direction should be that the Air Force assumes primary responsibility for all such "white" activities, i.e. procurements

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which are of extremely large scope or which require competitive bidding, or for other reason cannot be concealed from the normal Department of Defense security system; and that the CIA will assume primary responsibility for the so-called "black" procurements, which for reasons of security must be concealed from all persons not knowledgeable of the specific program involved.

Returning now to the ongoing projects mentioned previously, which the National Reconnaissance Office will direct from here on, the following specific assignments of primary responsibility within the NRO are reaffirmed:

GUSART. The management, technical direction, operational control and security of project GUSART will remain as it has in the past under the primary auspices of the CIA. The primary responsibility for the Air Force variants of GUSART will, as they have in the past, be the primary concern of the Air Force. In all matters of mutual interest and specifically on the management of interrelated items such as the development of air frame, of engines, and of mutual components, the project personnel will provide crossflow of information between the Air Force and CIA with particular attention being given to decisions made which may have secondary impacts from one program to another. The project officers within CIA for the basic GUSART system and within the Air Force for the Air Force adaptations will be the focal point for this information crossflow.

CORONA/MIDAS/ARGON. Over-all security aspects of this program will continue as in the past within the framework of the agreed security system under primary cognizance of CIA. Launch scheduling and launching, orbital

and recovery operations will remain under primary cognizance of the Air Force. Primary cognizance for management and technical direction of hardware aspects will remain within the Air Force for boosters, orbital vehicles, an[redacted] within CIA for photographic payloads and nonacoms. At a suitable ti[redacted] payload cognizance should shift to CIA and standardized nonacoms cognizance should revert to the Air Force when and if all revealing features can be later incorporated in a secure area. The CIA will continue primary cognizance of operational planning and control of payload operation and target coverage. As above, the Air Force and CIA project officers will be focal points for crossflow of information within HEO.

SAMOS. Security aspects of this activity have been aligned with the procedures of the agreed-to uniform security system of HEO. The desirability of mutual use of certain assets for this project and CORONA/MIDAS/ ARGON, particularly in the areas of target planning and operations, is [redacted] cognizance of CIA. No project officers, as such, are or will be designated within CIA for SAMOS activities. In this case the focal points for crossflow of information will be project officers within the Air Force and [redacted]

In addition to the projects named above, certain other activities, largely of an ELINT nature, will, if continued, fall under the cognizance

of the National Reconnaissance Office. These ELINT projects are under individual scrutiny in order to reach a decision as to desirability of continuance and appropriate division of management responsibility in line with the assignment of "black" and "white" procurement and technical direction functions.

Project HEXAGON, to the extent that this activity remains in being, will continue in all aspects under primary cognizance of CIA. A uniform system of security control for all projects falling under NRO cognizance has been established. This system will dictate appropriate procedures to be used by either Air Force or CIA security personnel and is in line with policies established for the security restrictions which surround highly sensitive activities of this nature. The Air Force and CIA parts of the NRO are being linked by secure communication facilities for mutual exchange of information relating to NRO activities.

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